

**ABSTRACT**

In one aspect, it is realized that changes in routing configuration (and therefore network topology) may have an effect on how data is forwarded in a communication network. More particularly, it is realized the changes in the control plane have a statistical  
5 effect on information tracked in the data plane, and this relation may be used by a network manager in monitoring the network and determining a control plane cause of a data plane forwarding effect. For instance, a change in BGP routing information (control plane information) may affect the data forwarded by a router based on the changed BGP routing information (e.g., next hop data may be forwarded to a different BGP router attached to  
10 another physical port). A system and method are provided that correlate control plane and data plane information to support root cause analysis functions.